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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [UP](#)  
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: FORMER NSDC SECRETARY KINAKH ON  
TRANSNISTRIA, BELARUS, RUSSIA

Classified By: Ambassador, reason 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Summary: In Ambassador's May 17 farewell call on outgoing National Secretary and Defense Council Secretary Anatoliy Kinakh, who has resigned in order to take up a seat in the new parliament (Rada), Kinakh detailed Ukrainian thinking on Transnistria, Belarus, and the deteriorating Ukraine-Russia relationship. Kinakh contended that Russia was the real problem in Transnistria, that Moscow was financially propping up Transnistria leader Smirnov's self-blockade through significant transfers, and that Transnistrian Supreme Soviet Leader Shevchuk might prove a viable opponent to Smirnov and his pro-Russia clique. On Belarus, Kinakh stressed Ukraine's disapproval of the recent presidential election, its decision not to invite Belarus President Lukashenko to the Chernobyl 20th anniversary commemoration, and its approval of EU actions against the Lukashenko regime. Russian-Ukrainian relations had been on the downslide since late 2005, as the result of a conscious Russian plan to create problems for Ukraine, limit its movement Westward, and contain any spillover of democratization in the region. End Summary.

Transnistria: Russia the problem; Shevchuk an alternative?  
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¶2. (C) Ex-NSDC Secretary Kinakh told Ambassador May 17 that he and Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk had convened a GOU meeting on Moldova and Transnistrian policy May 16. The Ukraine-Moldova Intergovernmental Commission was scheduled to meet May 24, chaired by the two Prime Ministers. The GOU objective was to get the 5-plus-2 discussions on Transnistria back on track. It was clear that the scheduled May 18 session would not occur, due to mutual recriminations between Chisinau and Tiraspol. The May 16 GOU meeting reinforced GOU determination to continue enforcement of the customs regime.

¶3. (C) The real problem in Transnistria ultimately was Russia, claimed Kinakh. Ukraine hoped the July G-8 meeting would put real pressure on Moscow to adopt a more constructive approach on Transnistria. The recent meetings between Transnistria's Smirnov and high-ranking Russian officials in Moscow demonstrated that they were working on a plan; the Russian Security Services (FSB) were clearly involved, with Vladimir Antyufeyev (Transnistrian "Minister of State Security") allegedly planning a referendum for this June. Kinakh claimed that the Russians were currently financing payments of \$50 million a quarter for the Pension Fund and minimum salary levels of \$40-50/month, compared to the \$80-90/month average before the self-blockade; Russia had also just extended a \$150 million credit for the same purpose, using the Sberbank affiliate in Tiraspol to transfer the funds. However, the assistance would not fully offset the economic losses of the self-blockade; if Smirnov did not change his policy, the inevitable result would be economic migration of people out of Transnistria, including into

Ukraine.

¶4. (C) Kinakh suggested that the head of the Transnistrian Supreme Soviet, Yevgeniy Shevchuk, was a young, pragmatic representative of Transnistrian businesses opposed to the Smirnov-imposed "self-blockade," which had created real tensions between Smirnov and Shevchuk. Smirnov had forbade Shevchuk to travel to Kiev to meet Kinakh, as had been planned. Shevchuk had sent a signal that he was ready for dialogue. Kinakh said that the GOU was working through business contacts to relay messages to Shevchuk and suggested that Shevchuk could be a possible opponent to Smirnov in the "presidential" elections planned for December. It was important to explore ways of "removing" the radical, pro-Russian clique in Transnistria represented by Smirnov and his inner circle. Ukraine fully supported "pre-term" elections under OSCE auspices whenever those could be arranged.

Belarus: no platform for Lukashenka  
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¶5. (C) Kinakh said that Ukraine's relationship with Belarus had quieted down in comparison to the post-Belarus election period (note: when a number of Ukrainian citizens were temporarily detained in elections-related activity). He stressed that Ukraine had pointedly shelved preliminary plans to have a Yushchenko-Lukashenka meeting at Chornobyl on the twentieth anniversary of the April 26, 1986 disaster to avoid giving Lukashenka a platform to claim legitimacy. Many innocent Belarusian citizens had suffered human rights violations during and after the elections. Kinakh agreed with the EU decision to implement a visa blacklist for Lukashenka and key regime officials involved in election fraud and expressed support for a potential EU effort against

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regime figure bank accounts as well.

Russia: plans to meddle in Ukraine  
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¶6. (C) Kinakh dated the deterioration of Ukrainian-Russian relations to the second half of 2005, prior to the gas crisis, which he said was but one of a long list of problems and provocations from Moscow. He alleged that Russian President Putin, in conjunction with the FSB, had formulated a scenario to create doubt and instability in Ukraine, threatening the latter's aspirations to 1) integrate into European institutions and NATO and 2) act as a beacon and supporter of democratic advances in the region. The Russian reaction to the May 4 Summit in Vilnius spoke for itself. Russia clearly had made a strategic decision to project its interests more aggressively around the world. That affected Ukrainian interests, and its government's and people's right to choose their own path. It would be important for Ukraine's next government to address the Ukrainian-Russian dynamic, because current trends only portended worsening relations, he concluded.

¶7. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website at [www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev).  
Herbst